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ABSTRACT

An exploratory study examined how gender might be connected with differences in how teachers of basic writing talk about their version of the course which David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky describe in their book "Facts, Counterfacts, and Artifact: Theory and Method for a Reading and Writing Course." Subjects, five male and five female composition instructors with varying degrees of experience in teaching the "Facts" curriculum based on the book, responded to a series of open-ended questions, including questions dealing with their teaching experiences, initial reactions to the course, changes they would like to make, definitions of academic discourse, and the way their gender affected the way they teach or feel. Transcripts of the interviews were analyzed to determine the degree to which the teachers' interpretations of the "Facts" course emphasizes one or the other of the two parts (intellectual practice or stylistic conventions) of academic discourse. Transcripts were also analyzed for any connection between teachers' gender orientation (masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated) and their various readings of the "Facts" course. Results indicated that while the course has a richness that allows interpretation, fewer than half the subjects saw an invitation to creative interpretation in the Bartholomae-Petrosky text. Results also indicated that the teachers who did perceive it that way were mostly female, were always people who had taught the course more than once, and were the most androgynous individuals in the group. (Seven notes are included and 11 refernces are attached.) (RS)

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Gender and Teaching Academic Discourse: How Teachers Talk about Facts, Counterfacts, and Artifacts

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Even if we consider ourselves to be the most student-centered, nonauthoritarian teachers, our classrooms are the sites of constant rhetorical exchanges in which students are unavoidably and relentlessly confronted with language which encourages them to adhere to some of the socially constructed truths to which we ourselves ascribe. And while teachers rarely promote explicitly their own political, religious, or social agendas in their classrooms, our most deep-seated beliefs are still implicit in all that we do. As Jane Tompkins argues, "What we do in our classrooms is our politics. No matter what we say about Third World this or feminist that, our actions and interactions with students week in and week out prove what we are for and what we are against in the long run" ("Pedagogy" 660). Therefore, as teachers of composition, it is important to recognize and acknowledge the variety of factors that--often unconsciously--influence us as we put a particular composition theory into practice, factors such as gender, race, class, sexual

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orientation, personality type, religious or secular ethical traditions, regional or national origins, and the institutional contexts in which we teach. Having acknowledged the importance and interdependence of all these factors, however, my purpose in this essay is to describe an exploratory research project that considers how just one of them--gender--might be connected with differences in how teachers of basic writing talk about their version of the course which David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky describe in their book Facts, Counterfacts, and Artifact: Theory and Method for a Reading and Writing Course. While I might defend the usefulness of limiting my focus to gender by pointing out how often the variable of gender has been ignored in past studies of teaching and writing, and by arguing that the field of composition studies can still benefit from small-scale studies which make gender a primary focus (at least as a foundation for larger projects which examine the contexts of teaching in all their complexity), in fact my decision to undertake a study of gender and teaching and to focus on this particular course grew out of the exigencies of a rather specific rhetorical situation.

In the fall of 1990, I was tutoring in a basic writing program in which experienced teachers were working within the theoretical framework of the Facts course, although they were free to experiment with the course and to adapt it to suit their own teaching styles and pedagogical goals. Since I was quite impressed by the curriculum and the degree to which students

seemed engaged in their writing, I was startled when a colleague visiting from another university described the course as "paternalistic." Her statement prompted me to reflect upon the implications that recent research and theories about gender and writing might have for understanding more fully the impetus behind much of the criticism that has been leveled against the Facts curriculum.

In advocating that we initiate students--especially marginalized basic writers--into "the language and methods of the academy" (Facts) through an intensive read-to-write course, Bartholomae and Petrosky seem to be promoting what might be perceived as a masculinist writing course. That is, in teaching students to compose responses to readings and eventually to express them within conventions of academic discourse which have evolved out of the long, patriarchal history of the academy, the course can be seen as being as masculine as it is conservative. However, the Bartholomae-Petrosky theory and pedagogy also has a more unconventional side. In asking students to explore significant experiences in their adolescence, the course often elicits intensely personal writing and values a process of discovery as students are expected to make meaning rather than find meaning in texts. These aspects of the course seem quite compatible with feminist pedagogies that make a point of valuing writing that is "exploratory, autobiographical, and an organic exploration of a topic in an intimate, subjective voice" (Caywood and Overing xiv)[1] Specifically, I see the early assignments in

the course encouraging students to learn what Peter Elbow calls the "intellectual practices" of the academy[2] without concerning themselves (yet) with those stylistic conventions that--as Elbow notes--"tend toward the sound of reasonable, disinterested, perhaps even objective (dare I say it?) men" (my emphasis). Thus, because the Facts course can be seen as advocating that we teach students to gain access to conventional (and arguably masculine)[3] academic discourse through somewhat unconventional (and perhaps feminist or feminine) means, it lends itself especially well to a study of gender and teaching.

The Interviews

To gain insight into how the Facts course--with its unique combination of what might be perceived of as "masculinist" and "feminist" dimensions--gets translated into practice, I decided to interview ten teachers who were working with this curriculum in the basic writing program where I was tutoring. I wanted to talk to both men and women, among whom I could expect to find a range of orientations toward gender roles. Since only five men had ever taught the Facts course in this particular basic writing program, I decided to interview all five. I used three major criteria in selecting five women: 1) I chose people whom I had already met and could contact easily; (2) I looked for a group of five that would include teachers both experienced and inexperienced in teaching the course; and (3) I tried to ask women who seemed quite different from each other (especially in

terms of gender and having a feminist consciousness). Everyone I asked agreed enthusiastically to participate in an interview.

To make the interviewees feel as comfortable as possible, I conducted the interviews at times and locations that they suggested, usually in their offices, although one took place in a departmental conference room, one at my home, and one at my office. In each case, we were alone and uninterrupted during the course of the interview, which lasted anywhere from a half an hour to an hour. The teachers interviewed fall into a wide range of categories: Of the women, one is a graduate student, three are full or part-time instructors, and one is a full-time administrator/instructor. The men include four graduate students, one with three years of teaching experience at the secondary level (in addition to several years of working at the college-level as a teaching assistant), and one with over twelve years of experience as an instructor in community colleges prior to becoming a graduate student. The fifth man is an instructor with 4-5 years of teaching experience. The women range in age from twenty-seven to forty-one and the men from twenty-five to thirty-nine. Although years overall experience teaching experience are fairly equally distributed among the men and women, the women have by far the most experience teaching the Bartholomae-Petrosky course; most of them have taught a version of it for at least three quarters, and two of them have taught it for over two years. The man most experienced with teaching the course has taught it for two quarters.

These ten teachers' responses to a series of open-ended questions were tape-recorded and transcribed. The first group of questions dealt with their experience in teaching (both the Facts course and in general), their ages, influences on their ideas about teaching composition, and their initial reactions to the Bartholomae-Petrosky pedagogy. I also asked them about changes they would like to make or have made in the course, how free they feel to change, what strengths they see in the course, what group of students' needs the course serves best or least, and whether their attitudes toward the course have changed since they began teaching it. In the second group of questions, I asked them what they see as the goal of the course, how comfortable they are with that goal, how they would define academic discourse, and how they would describe a successful paper at the end of the quarter in their classes. Through my third and final series of questions, then, I wanted to see how these people saw themselves in terms of gender roles. Therefore, I asked them about their relationships with their students their styles as teachers, and themselves as people. At the end, I invited them to speculate about how their sexes or genders might have affected the way they teach or feel about teaching the Facts course.

With the transcriptions in hand, I color-coded teachers' responses according to question. However, because of the open-ended nature of the questions, the transcriptions make extraordinarily rich reading, and since looking at only isolated responses to questions would mean ignoring much of that richness,

I did what Mary Belenky and her collaborators in the book Women's Ways of Knowing call a "contextual analysis," which involves developing a feel for each person's experience of themselves and their teaching through reading and rereading the transcripts. After many readings, and after a discussion with another reader who had studied the data independently,[4] I was finally able to narrow my focus to two significant areas. First, I drew upon Elbow's distinction between two parts of academic discourse--intellectual practices and stylistic conventions--to consider the degree to which the teachers' interpretations of the Facts curriculum emphasize one or the other. In general, teachers' descriptions of the course's purpose fall into three broad categories. In the first group, teachers emphasize the stylistic conventions of academic discourse;[5] in the second, teachers help students make a transition from personal writing with little concern for stylistic conventions toward more distanced discourse which combines the intellectual practices of academic writing with its traditional stylistic conventions; and in the third, teachers focus on intellectual practices with little concern for traditional stylistic conventions.

Given these three perspectives on the course, I sought to discover whether there were any significant connections between teachers' gender orientations and their various readings of the Facts curriculum. If, as reader-response theories suggest, our interpretations of literary texts can be influenced by gender, why not our reading of texts that focus on composition theory and

practice? With this question in mind, I looked at the transcripts in terms of the coding categories that Belenky et al. call educational dialectics, supplementing them with a few categories from Carol Gilligan's study In a Different Voice. Specifically, I looked to see whether any particular mode predominated as a teacher talked about her or himself. The bimodal dimensions I considered include relationships vs. rules, rational vs. intuitive, means vs. ends, collaborative vs. solitary, personal vs. impersonal, listening vs. speaking, support vs. challenge, process-oriented vs. goal-oriented, and equity vs. hierarchy. (I considered the first part of each pair as "feminine" and the second as "masculine"). By no means was it possible neatly to categorize anyone on side or the other of such dichotomies, and even as I used them as a basis for identifying patterns, I constantly restrained any impulses to characterize people simply as either "masculine" or "feminine." Instead, I kept in mind the four possible orientations toward gender roles identified by the Bem Sex Role Inventory, according to which people "may be labeled masculine sex-typed, feminine sex-typed, androgynous, and undifferentiated" (Crawford and Chaffin 14).

Finally, before beginning a discussion of the teachers' gender-orientations and their views on the Facts course, I want to emphasize the fact that, although I have at some point visited the classrooms of most of the people I interviewed, this study is based solely on interview data. And like all interviews, the information exchanged in these conversations was influenced by a

variety of factors difficult to identify and measure, including the fact that I am a woman, a graduate student, and a person whom some of the interviewees knew well, some not so well. It is also significant to remember that comments teachers make about what they perceive themselves doing may or may not reflect what others (students, for example) may have seen going on in their classrooms. In other words, this is a study of how teachers talk about the way they teach the Facts pedagogy, and the categories that appear in the following paragraphs represent my interpretations of what they said. At the same time, I have sought to refrain from engaging in much heavy-handed interpretation in the sections that follow in an effort to allow these teachers, as much as possible, to speak for themselves and to give readers an opportunity, if they choose, to interpret their words differently than I have done.

Brian and Mark: Voices of the Academy

Two of the men I interviewed reacted quite similarly to their experience teaching a syllabus modeled after the Facts course. The basic writing program in which they teach has two standard syllabi based on Bartholomae and Petrosky's curriculum, and both Brian and Mark taught a three-credit hour version of the course which explores the theme of "What makes a life experience significant?"

Brian is a thirty-nine year old graduate student with 13 years of experience teaching basic writing. His initial reaction

to the Facts method was positive; he especially liked the idea of teaching a course around a theme, and he identified the course's goal as "trying to bring students closer to academic discourse," which he defines exclusively in terms of stylistic conventions, describing it as a kind of writing that has a certain formality of language, tone, and style commonly found in scholarly discourse. For Brian, this discourse places a premium on the abstract, the third person; it's distanced and uses the jargon of the field. He feels at ease with the goal of teaching students academic writing and said that "ideally [his] basic writers would be able to do this by the end of the course, but it couldn't happen in ten weeks, or even a year."

The second teacher, Mark, a thirty-five-year old male with over 5 years of teaching offered a similar definition. For him, producing academic writing means reevaluating assumptions about what an academic audience expects, and thinking about how students' register and persona will be received; therefore he tries to help students move away from writing "discursive and talky" papers. Significantly, he is attracted to what I have termed the masculine aspect of the method--teaching traditional stylistic conventions--but is uncomfortable with what I have called its feminist emphasis on students' writing personal experience essays, especially since, as he said, "There are certain risks I am unwilling to take in opening myself up and talking about experiences." Basically, he wonders whether asking students to write personal experience essays is the most

expedient way to teach academic writing.

In fact, both Mark and Brian have taught the Bartholomae-Petrosky course for one quarter and both seem to be masculine sex-typed. They each describe their relationships with students as being distant and hierarchical. As Brian commented, "I'm the teacher they're the students. I ask them to call me by my first name but they don't call me anything." And according to Mark, the syllabus actually calls for a feminine teaching style, which he says causes him to be more "nurturing and supportive than he would be in another course, although he still sees himself as being less nurturing than most of his colleagues. He says that "because of the way the class is set up, you don't go in and pound your shoe on the table and come off as really authoritarian and dictatorial when you've got all these touchy-feelly-caring-sharing discussions about papers going on." At the same time, though, he does see himself maintaining some distance, emphasizing the fact that "if students ask for help, I help. If not, I figure, 'I'm not your mother. You decide whether you need help or not." This example certainly supports his description of himself as less nurturing than other basic writing teachers, a characterization that applies--to a lesser extent--to Brian as well.

Ben: A Self-Reflexive Voice of the Academy

Like Brian and Mark, a third teacher I interviewed, Ben, seems to be a predominantly masculine sex-typed individual. He

is a thirty-one year old graduate student with over four years of experience teaching basic writing, some of which came at the secondary level. He also describes his relationship with his students in terms of separation rather than connection, referring to that relationship as "congenial" and "rewarding to the extent that he gets to know them, which is pretty limited." In fact, he sees students as being purposefully distant, too willing to capitalize on the college setting where you can keep distance from your instructors. He also views his authority as a real issue in the classroom and in conferences, where he senses that students are not at ease. Interestingly, although doesn't consider himself to be uncomfortable with personal topics, he did choose to substitute a theme he calls "Aims of Education" for that of Growth and Change in Adolescence, the more intensely personal topic of inquiry described in Facts. It is only when he talks about the Bartholomae-Petrosky pedagogy that it becomes clear why, while Brian and Mark are pure "Voices of the Academy," Ben is more complicated. Even though he likes the idea of having the students be part of an extended academic inquiry, he wonders what the implications of that might be. In other words, he is concerned about the problems he sees in academic discourse, the academic community, and in their effects on individual students. In the end, though, he feels it is inevitable that there is going to be a trade off, and students will have to give up something to get the academy's ways of writing and knowing in return. He sees a possible solution in making discourse itself part of academic

inquiry, which would allow students to do more than blindly emulate academic discourse. They would be able to use language to reflect upon and question itself, just as Ben himself does so relentlessly.

Nancy: Accepting the Academy's Voice of Authority

Next to Ben's continual questioning and problematizing, the fourth teacher--Nancy--is more willing to accept the authority of the Bartholomae-Petrosky text unquestioningly. She doesn't seem to have thought through issues related to the course in a theoretical sense; she struck me as someone simply trying to do her best to teach the syllabus she has been given. When I asked her what her initial reaction to reading Facts was, she said laughingly, "It was like, you know, it's so crazy it just might work, that kind of thing." It seemed difficult for her--at least in the context of this interview--to talk about the course in specific and unambiguous terms. For instance, she said, "I think some good things happened here besides the things we are trying to make happen. I mean those things we are trying to make happen too, but those aren't the things that I would know how to make happen, not that it's magic or anything, but the students make that happen by experiencing the reading, the writing, the discussing, the sharing of ideas. And then something happens within their own cognitive process." This response, full of unspecified "things," is typical of numerous times when she seemed unable or afraid to make a point--her point. (Notice how

often she talks in terms of "we" instead of "I"). Although she refers to her students taking on the authority to make meaning from what they read, she seems, like the "received knowers" that Mary Belenky and her coauthors describe in Women's Ways of Knowing, reluctant to speak out of her own authority and perhaps even unable to see herself as having any authority.

When I asked Nancy specifically about her definition of academic discourse, her responses were still quite general, making it difficult to situate her in terms of Elbow's distinctions between intellectual practices and stylistic conventions. She mentioned students' "starting to 'enter into the university mentality' and alluded to Bartholomae's article "Inventing the University," ultimately defining an ideal student paper in her class quite generically--as one with a clear thesis that is supported coherently by the rest of the paper. But when I asked her if she thinks these things characterize academic discourse for the university or for David Bartholomae, she seemed to retreat and answered laughingly, "I have no idea. I mean I don't know. When Bartholomae came, you know, I heard him talk last spring. I thought I was thinking along the same lines as he was, but to speak for the whole university and what people want academic discourse to be, I don't know."

While my inclination is to characterize her emphasis on the "things" students learn through reading, writing, and discussing as a tendency to focus more on intellectual practices than on stylistic conventions, a more significant point to make about

Nancy is that her pedagogy seems ultimately to be driven not so much by any awareness of a particular kind of discourse she seeks to teach her students, but rather by a desire to nurture her students' growth as people. In fact, when she responded to the more personal questions on my list, she herself became visibly more at ease, her voice taking on the clarity and authority it had lacked earlier. As she spoke, she described herself and her background as being in many ways stereotypically feminine.[6] A forty-one year old mother of three with a masters degree in English Education, Nancy has over ten years of teaching experience, first teaching junior high for several years, then taking a few years off to have children, and then when she became restless, teaching nursery school. Perhaps not surprisingly, her relationships with her students and her style as a teacher seem to be all that Mark's, Brian's, and Ben's are not. Describing herself as maternal and caring, she talks about how she simply cannot teach without really connecting with students. Although she is careful to point out that she always sends students to a professional counselor when they need it, she is very comfortable with the personal nature of the course's assignments and sees writing those kinds of assignments as being a potentially therapeutic way for her students to resolve personal problems. She's ready to accept student's feelings because, as she reminded me, "It's mom you go to when it hurts." Perhaps more clearly than with the other teachers, Nancy's feminine gender orientation seemed to be powerfully and obviously connected with the ways she

teaches some version of academic discourse in her classroom.

Joan and Charles: Dissenting Voices

Unlike Nancy, who has taught basic writing for five years and the Bartholomae-Petrosky course several times, when I interviewed two twenty-six year-old graduate students, Joan and Charles, it was the first time they had taught basic writing or the Facts course. They had both taught freshman English and their training to teach that course based on a "modes" approach seems to have greatly influenced their ideas about how composition should be taught. Their stories are particularly interesting since they had by far the most negative reactions of anyone I interviewed.

Joan's initial reaction to seeing the standard syllabus was that she didn't like it, primarily because she considered it "monotonous to deal with the same general topic for ten weeks." She said, "I'm not so comfortable with teaching this syllabus, but it's my first quarter. Maybe later I'll say it works, but now I don't feel like I can change assignments to suit individual students." And like Ben, Joan want to make the aim of the course more explicit to the students; she sees the Facts approach as covert, asking how students can value an assignment as academic writing if the teacher doesn't

> come out and tell them the purpose behind it, which some people say destroys the whole thing. It's built into the theory. Bartholomae and Petrosky would say

> "no" don't tell them. Let's let them become aware of it themselves, but when you get through week ten and they're still not aware of it, what do you do, tell them the last day of class? I'd be angry if I were a student.

In fact, Joan did go ahead and make what she saw as the goal of the course explicit to her students. For her, the goal is a "task-oriented" one: Students need to write something abstract and give concrete details to support that point. They much "show us that they can go back and forth between two things. Some people would say it grooms a way of thinking--of abstract thought." In her view, this goal is just one part of academic discourse, and if students were just simply told what it is, "we could deal with it and devote more time to other issues that are important in their writing and in academic writing--their voice, for one." All in all, though, Joan does seem to accept the necessity of "indoctrinating" students into the intellectual practices and the stylistic conventions of academic discourse as long as students know what is happening to them. She recognizes that in academic writing "your individuality is often censored, but, you know, there's reality and there's what would be nice."

In terms of gender orientation, Joan was difficult to classify, but she falls most readily into the "undifferentiated" category. She describes herself in terms that Crawford and Chaffin call "neutral with respect to gender roles" (14). For instance, she calls herself "not superficial" and "honest," as

opposed to using gender-typed terms such as Nancy's "maternal" and "emotional" or Ben's "heavy-handed" and "egomaniacal." Furthermore, she point out that she cannot separate her perspective as a marginalized student and as a feminist from her womanhood, believing that her feminist consciousness affects her way of looking at the course more than any other factor.

Just as it did for Joan, the Facts pedagogy poses some serious problems for Charles, but he reacts to it much differently than Joan does. Instead of working to modify the course, Charles chooses instead to give up on it completely. He describes his problem as follows:

> As the course went along, I felt like I was lost, out of my element. In the first place, I don't normally do the kind of reading and discussion that people need to do to get this thing to work. I admit I have a hard time with discussions as a teacher.

Finding himself increasingly uncomfortable, Charles decided to "junk the last paper and let them write anything they want as long as they base it on what they're doing in their journals." This sort of assignment is compatible with his goal for any beginning writing course: to give students a good attitude about writing. He sees the Facts approach, on the other hand, as being aimed at making students "cognitively enhanced," and therefore serving best students who "need help on certain cognitive skills" and who are "unfamiliar with academic conventions and how to read a textbook."

Charles's comments suggest that his problems with the course stemmed largely from the teaching style that he sees the course requiring, and although he emphasis the Facts course places on academic discourse might be considered inherently conservative and masculine, Charles seems to have rejected it in lieu of what is in some ways an even more masculine approach. Faced with a curriculum that calls for collaborative group discussions in which the teacher is ideally silent, he replaced the group discussions with conferences which he favors because they are one-on-one. One way of interpreting this move is that it allows him to gainn increased control; as Carol Stranger argues, "using the one-to-one tutorial, the instructor judges the paper against an ideal text, a composite of the male canon, and bestows authority on the essay as well as controlling its interpretation" (36).

In fact, with regard to Charles, Carol Gilligan's distinctions between men, who tend to concern themselves with rules, and women, who generally care more about relationships is quite revealing (8-9). About himself, Charles says:

> I like getting things done, often at the expense of being nice about it. I've had to learn to be a lot more willing to let thing be not necessarily right, but not hurt other people along the way. Not that I was walking around trashing other people, but to be more sensitive to other people's feelings.

Charles feels good about the changes he is making in his teaching

style because, he says, in the classroom it is "very successful." Thus, Charles continues to work on developing what might be seen as a more "feminine" teaching style for quite pragmatic reasons, whereas someone like Nancy, for example, describes her tendency to nurture students as natural, instinctive, and unavoidable.

Douglas, Marie, Deborah, and Brenda: Redefining Academic Discourse

This final group of teachers, like Joan and Charles, had problems with what they perceived to be the central doctrines of the Bartholomae-Petrosky method. Unlike Joan and Charles, though, they found ways to make it work by innovating within its framework. Most significantly, they composed for themselves and their students definitions of academic discourse that differed significantly from the fairly traditional ones offered by Bartholomae and Petrosky and the teachers I have discussed so far. The first of these teachers is, Douglas, is a twenty-five year old graduate student teaching the course for the second time. He says that his students are experiencing something that will help them as writers, but it's not explicitly writing for the academy. Specifically, he sees the goal of the Bartholomae-Petrosky course as being to raise the confidence level of writers--to find a voice and realize they have something to say and then to say it in Standard Edited American English. Interestingly, he consistently emphasizes what I have called the feminist or feminine aspects of the course, explaining, for

example, that writing as a process, getting students to write about their own experience, and encouraging students to find their own voices are central to the course.

In accounting for his success in teaching the Bartholomae-Petrosky course, I was surprised to hear Douglas contrast himself with Charles: "Think of Charles Spencer who doesn't like this syllabus, okay. I think the differences between him and me has nothing to do with gender characteristics. I think it has something to do with creativity and ingenuity. He was constantly asking me what I was doing in my syllabus, and I could see he was kind of baffled; he wasn't sure what he would do." Significantly, though, whereas Charles certainly seemed to be masculine sex-typed, Douglas characterizes himself as more androgenous, if not feminine. Like Nancy, he sees a teacher's role as parental, and he truly believes that most teachers would see themselves as cargivers in relation to their students. He simply considers it a natural part of the teacher-student relationship. Clearly, though, it is Douglas himself who is a natural caregiver. And he turned out to be remarkably well-informed and articulate when it came to discussing his own gender:

> I read Carol Gilligan's <u>In a Different Voice</u>, and after I looked at the first chapter, where boys are concerned about rules, whereas girls are concerned with relationships, I saw that as a kind of gender characteristic. I was then that I decided gender characteristics could transcend sexual

> separation. I noticed in myself I had more feminine characteristics than masculine, or I had very many feminine characteristics. I would value relationships over rules. That really hit me hard because I realized I was not a typical male. At the same time, it wasn't threatening my masculinity. Somehow it supports a self image of myself that I don't mind having. I mean I don't feel trapped into this role as some women do.

Along with Douglas, three women fall into this final group. Like Douglas, they all describe themselves as being relatively androgynous, feel ambivalent about academic discourse, and find ways of adapting the Facts course to make it their own. Mindy, a thirty-five year old woman who both teaches and serves as the assistant director of the basic writing program, is the first of these women. Having taught in the program's pilot project, Mindy is one of the most experienced teachers of the Facts approach, and she teaches a ten-credit hour version of the course using the "Growth and Change in Adolescence" theme. Mindy's ambivalence about how she interprets Bartholomae and Petrosky's goal for the course is significant:

> The goal of the course is to get [students] to find validity in their own opinions, to see that they can make research. They don't just have to copy down ideas. Those are specific goals. Bartholomae and Petrosky talk about that . . . conventions of academic discourse, yet I am . . . I don't like that language. Those terms send up red flags to me.

> [My colleague] and I have a running joke that whenever I don't agree with him I say he doesn't really mean that--because I don't like to think that I'm indoctrinating them. For lack of a better term, I guess it does make them feel a little more comfortable with the conventions of the academy. I think I'm teaching them the conventions according to how I want the academy to be. I'm indoctrinating them in that sense.

In particular, I was struck here by what I see as Mindy's willingness both here and elsewhere to give David Bartholomae as much credit as possible, even to the extent of giving him credit for saying what she thinks. When I followed up by asking her why the words "academic discourse" send up flags for her and not for him, she responded:

> I don't know, Kelly, because I think he's just great, and I don't know why he uses those words. I guess they much not have the same kind of red flags for him as they do for me. I think that on some level he must feel that that's a good thing to do but I don't think for a minute that he wants them to be little research robots. But I think when he uses those words his focus is on something else, on general theories of the course, and maybe that's an easy way to approach it. Maybe he is just more concerned with that than I am. I think that's true in some sense.

Perhaps Mindy's reluctance to call what she's doing something other than teaching Bartholomae's method is connected with the

tendency she sees in herself to be self-deprecating. In any case she is certainly innovating within the framework of the approach to teach her own version of academic discourse. Significantly, like Douglas, she describes herself as androgynous, observing that she "tends to have close male friends." She told me, "If there is such a thing as a male point of view and a female one, then I probably am as much or more of a mixture than other people might be."

Deborah, too, stands out as being an androgynous (or perhaps "undifferentiated") person who re-defines academic discourse for her class, but unlike Mindy, she is less concerned with giving Bartholomae credit for what she's done. Deborah is a thirty-year old instructor teaching the course for the first time, and when I asked about her teaching style she talked--in marked contrast to Charles, for instance--about her tendency to hang back and listen, an ability she attributes to being a woman: "I think [being female] makes me sit back more. Some people might call it passivity. I think of it as me letting the class be in charge of what's going on." Deborah, though, does not talk about herself in the stereotypical terms that Nancy did; instead, she uses mostly gender neutral terms such as "stubborn and shy and well-meaning." Like Joan, she claims that her feminist consciousness affects how she teaches more than simply being a woman: "I find myself and I find the class talking more about--not only growth and change in adolescence--but what happens when you are an adolescent that makes you realize social injustices and how they

are connected with how you fit or don't fit in with certain groups." She told me that she isn't sure how she would define academic discourse because it is all wrapped up in what she thinks it should be, and not how other people think it is. For her it should be a creative, intelligent discussion of whatever subject you are talking about, not as formal as some people see it. Overall much less ambivalent and more defiant than Mindy, she told me bluntly, "I don't think [students] are really writing academic discourse in my class, and I don't think I really want them to!" In this comment, I heard the same kind of relief and freedom that Jane Tompkins expresses in her article "Me and My Shadow" when she takes off the straitjacket in which she must write academic articles and says "to hell with it!" (178).[7]

The final teacher, Brenda, is a twenty-nine year old instructor with over two years of experience in teaching the Bartholomae-Petrosky course who shares this enthusiastic rejection of traditional academic discourse with its emphasis on stylistic conventions. However, she also shares Mindy's tendency to locate the basis for what she is doing in the Bartholomae-Petrosky text. The academic discourse that she wants students to strive for is personal and creative, yet clear and controlled. She says that her notion of the ideal academic discourse is writing with a clear sense of purpose, writing which answers questions that we as readers might have along the way (except where the writer wants us to remain open-minded). Also, "the writer would demonstrate control in that paper thorough all kinds

of tools, asking questions, using dialogue," whatever the content of that paper dictates. In reading it, the reader should discover something, and the writer should also have "a sense of discovery and a really powerful sense of self. We would know that somebody is there talking to us and sharing . . . something new." She notes that there are "many ways of engaging readers at the college level. You don't do the same thing for your biochemistry class that you do for freshman English. I don't think that biochemistry paper has to be dull and lifeless, without meaning, no sense of discovery. I think it can be just as engaging."

Yet at times her students' discourse does become distant, lacking a sense of voice or audience. At those times, Brenda is disappointed, but she realizes that it will probably be okay for "the kind of writing they are going to do in college." Between Brenda's search in her students' writing for a "voice that doesn't just copy ideas into a notebook and turn it in" and Bartholomae's sense that "leading students to believe they are responsible for something new or original, unless they understand what those words mean with regard to writing, is a dangerous and counterproductive task" (142), there is, I think, some tension. Yet, despite any differences between Brenda's philosophy and Bartholomae's, she still insists on emphasizing their basic commonalities. She concluded the interview by saying:

> I realize today that there is a lot of individual interpretation with this course, and I realize that that's

part of the course. I don't think that [David Bartholomae] would argue with the way I teach the class, and I think that's one of the greatest gifts of his course, his book.

Conclusion

Brenda's words suggest that the Facts course has the sort of richness we usually ascribe to literary texts, a richness that invites, or at least allows, interpretation. Yet fewer than half the teachers interviewed saw an invitation to creative interpretation in the Bartholomae-Petrosky text. The teachers who did were mostly women, were always people who had taught the course more than once, and were the most androgynous individuals in the group. Perhaps it's because, as psychological research has shown, androgynous people "have a wider range of personality strengths than do sex-typed people, [and] should be capable of more flexible behavior in a variety of situations" (Crawford and Chaffin 14). Or perhaps it's that these teachers are "resisting readers," readers who--given at least a quarter to work with the course--can then both appropriate and reject portions of a text that is in some ways both masculine and feminist. They resemble the women readers who Susan Schibanoff describes in her article, "Taking the Gold out of Eygpt: The Fine Art of Reading as a Woman," one of whom is Chaucer's Wife of Bath, a woman who sometimes censors and destroys but often just misreads texts that do not serve her needs, that do not seem relevant to her values or experiences. Thus, "to support her argument for female

supremacy in marriage . . . the Wife repeats Paul's Biblical command that husbands love their wives, but selectively forgets the remainder of Paul's command--that wives obey their husbands" (88). The analogy between the Wife of Bath and the final group of teachers is compelling, for it is possible that teachers such as Douglas, Brenda, Mindy, and Deborah are in fact appropriating the parts of the Bartholomae-Petrosky theory that speak to their experience and values and rereading the parts of it that don't.

Of course, a study such as this one cannot establish any definite connections between gender and teachers' responses to the Facts composition theory and method, and certainly other factors, such as experience with the Bartholomae-Petrosky course, are also at work here. But it does suggest some ways in which the transition from composition theory to practice may be even more complicated than we already know it to be. And many of the questions these teachers answered in the interviews are ones which those of us concerned about gender issues in teaching could easily ask ourselves and our colleagues. The process of asking and answering them is consciousness-raising process, a process which can help make explicit what it is we are implicitly promoting in our writing classes--both through our teaching styles and in the conceptions of academic discourse which we share with our students.

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1. In the introduction to their book, Caywood and Overing mention the following characteristics of feminist pedagogies: (1) treating writing as a process, (2) valuing writing that is exploratory, autobiographical, and an organic exploration of a topic in an intimate subjective voice, (3) validation and expression of a private and individual voice, and "recognizing the equal value of the public and private, of personalized experience and detached abstraction" (xiv).

Of course, many definitions of what constitutes a feminist pedagogy differ from the ones offered by Caywood and Overing, and I am not suggesting that simply having students write about personal experiences necessarily makes a pedagogy feminist. Nevertheless, in this context, where such writing is juxtaposed with traditional, masculine academic discourse, it can be seen, at least, as relatively feminist (or feminine).

2. In Facts, Counterfacts, and Artifacts Bartholomae and Petrosky point out what they see as the positive aspects of academic discourse--its concern with "counterfactuality," "individuation," potentiality," and "freedom." These characteristics seem analogous to what Elbow calls the "intellectual practices" of the academy's discourse. In these practices, Elbow too sees positive qualities that he values highly: learning, intelligence, and sophistication. However, I see Bartholomae and Petrosky as being more comfortable than Elbow with the stylistic conventions of the discourse, although all of them claim these conventions should at some point be taught. My reading of Bartholomae and Petrosky on this point is significant since I tend to use it as a touchstone for taxonomizing the teachers I interviewed. That is, one question I asked myself as a grouped them is to what degree they seemed to emphasize the importance of intellectual practices versus stylistic conventions. Whether my reading of Bartholomae and Petrosky on

this point is "correct" (i.e., as close as possible to what the authors would say they intended), is not, I think, important. What matters is that readers of this essay recognize what interpretation of Bartholomae and Petrosky's theory I am working with in making my categories and describing teachers' stances.

3. I am somewhat uncomfortable with labeling aspects of a pedagogy "masculinist" or "feminist" since these terms can too easily be construed as indications of essentialism on my part. I use these terms for lack of better alternatives. I hope my later insistence on distinguishing between gender and sex is convincing evidence that I do not intend to suggest that traditional academic discourse (which I have termed "masculinist") comes any more naturally to males than to females or that "feminist" aspects of the course are somehow inherently feminine.

4. Michele Selig, a colleague from the psychology department, was especially helpful in coding people in terms of gender types. Her interpretation of the data in general was helpful since she came to it without knowing any of the teachers and without knowing much about the study except that I was interested in finding ways of grouping teachers based on the ways in which they characterized the sort of academic discourse they themselves teaching in their composition courses and based on their gender orientations.

5. In "Inventing the University," Bartholomae talks about stylistic conventions in terms of "helping students use "commonplaces, set phrases, ritual and gestures, and obligatory conclusions" and teaching them to "take on a persona of authority.

6. According to Belenky et al., for women in our society, being a "received knower" is usually means adherence to sex role stereotypes (134).

7. Deborah's version of the Facts course resembles the women's writing groups that Celia Lury describes in her essay "The Difference of Women's Writing: Essays on the Use of Personal Experience." Studies in Sexual Politics 15 (1987): 1-68. Like Deborah's students, women's writing groups often use autobiographical writing, and "what unites these groups is their relation to texts, which are no longer seen as things on their own, but as a link in a chain of communication, learning, and political and personal development" (20).